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PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

1846.

No. 64.

April 30, 1846.

The MARQUIS OF NORTHAMPTON, President, in the Chair,

“ History of the Mace given to the Royal Society by King Charles the Second.” By Charles Richard Weld, Esq., Barrister at Law, Assistant Secretary and Librarian to the Royal Society. Communicated by the Marquis of Northampton, President of the Royal Society.

The Second Charter of the Royal Society passed the Great Seal on the 22nd of April 1663, and in August following, Charles the Second presented the Society with the Mace at present in their possession.

It is probable that His Majesty resolved some time before to honour the Society with this mark of his esteem, for, in the above Charter, permission is given to have two Sergeants-at-Mace to attend upon the President (*duos servientes ad clavas, qui de tempore in tempus super Præsidem attendant*). The Council-Book of the Society records, that “on the 3rd of August 1663, the President (Lord Brouncker) informed the Society, that Sir Gilbert Talbot, Master of the Jewell House, had sent to him, without taking any fees, the Mace bestowed by His Majesty upon the Society;” and that he, the said President, had “in the Book of His Majesty’s Jewell House, acknowledged the receipt thereof for the Society*.”

This Mace, which fills so important an office in the Royal Society, as without it no Meeting can be held, is made of silver, richly gilt, and weighs 190 oz. avoirdupois. It consists of a Stem, handsomely chased, with a running pattern of the Thistle, terminated at the upper end by an urn-shaped head, surmounted by a Crown, Ball, and Cross. Upon the head are embossed figures of a Rose, Harp, Thistle, and Fleur-de-Lys, emblematic of England, Ireland, Scotland, and France, on each side of which are the letters C. R. Under the Crown, and at the top of the head, the Royal Arms ap-

* Vol. 1. p. 23.

pear very richly chased ; and at the other extremity of the Stem are two Shields, the one bearing the Arms of the Society, the other the following Inscription* :—

Ex Munificentia
Augustissimi Monarchæ
Caroli II.
Dei Gra. Mag. Brit. Franc. et Hib.
Regis &c.
Societatis Regalis ad Scientiam
Naturalem promouenda institutæ
Fundatoris et Patroni
An. Dni 1663.

To this Mace attaches a celebrity, which has long caused it to be regarded with extraordinary interest. It is almost superfluous to state, that this arises from the belief of its being the identical Mace turned out of the House of Commons by Oliver Cromwell when he dissolved the Long Parliament. So general has been this credence, that numberless visitors have come purposely to the Apartments of the Society to see the Mace, having read, or been assured, that it is the famous "Bauble;" and after minutely examining it, have departed, firmly persuaded that they have seen the Mace so rudely dealt with by the Protector.

Nor has its fame been confined to oral tradition. Books, professing to be authentic histories, have chronicled, that the Bauble Mace is in the possession of the Royal Society ; and I may mention that a few months ago, the proprietors of the Abbotsford Edition of the Waverley Novels applied for permission to make a drawing of the Mace to illustrate "Woodstock," an engraving of which appears in the above work, accompanied by a statement, "that it is a representation of the 'Bauble Mace' formerly belonging to the Long Parliament, and now in the possession of the Royal Society."

* The Arms of the Society and the Inscription were engraved on the Mace by the Society's directions in the year 1663 ; it was cleaned and regilt in 1756 at the expense of Lord Macclesfield, who was at that period President of the Society, as appears by the following entry in the Council Minutes under the date of July 29, 1756 :—

"The President having declared by letter to Mr. Watson, that he intended that the Mace shall be cleaned and repaired at his expense, it was

"Ordered, that Mr. Hawksbee do deliver the Mace to Messrs. Wyckes and Netherton, Silversmiths in Panton Street, for that purpose."

The Mace accordingly was put into thorough repair, regilt, and registered in the Excise office as weighing 190 oz.¹ At a Meeting of the Society on the 25th of November 1756, the thanks of the Society were unanimously voted to the President "for this obliging mark of his regard for them²."

In 1828 the Mace was again regilt and repaired, at an expense of £23 10s. It is now in excellent condition.

By the obliging kindness of Mr. Cadell, I am enabled to annex a very beautiful and accurate representation of the Mace, printed from the block used in the Abbotsford Edition of the Waverley Novels.

¹ Council Minutes, Vol. 4. pp. 177 and 178.

² Journal-Book, Vol. 23. p. 418.

I am entirely at a loss to conceive how this belief originated, and the more so, as there is not the slightest historical evidence in its favour; but, on the contrary, many facts which prove most indisputably, that the Mace in question has no pretension whatever to the designation of the "Bauble" of the Long Parliament.

I confess, that when the oft-repeated story, or legend as we may now call it, was imparted to me, I conceived a strong desire to learn on what historical grounds the matter rested. As an officer of the Royal Society, I felt it to be almost my duty when visitors came to see the "Bauble" to be able to authenticate its history, though it may be observed, that I have never heard any doubts whatever cast upon its supposed authenticity; so true is it, that we willingly cling to whatever is interesting and marvellous.

It however frequently occurred to me, that the Mace now before the Society could not be the Mace used in the House of Commons during the reign of Charles the First, and subsequently turned out by the Commonwealth Parliament; for when I thought of the democratic whirlwind that uprooted and swept away every vestige of royalty, it appeared to me, that nothing short of a miracle could account for the preservation of so conspicuous and decisive an emblem of sovereignty as the Mace presented to the Royal Society by Charles the Second.

Researches connected with a history of the Society, upon which I am engaged, led me, in the first place, to investigate the history of the famous "Bauble;" and secondly, that of the Mace of the Royal Society, in order to ascertain whether the latter and former are identical.

The result of these researches, which were far more laborious than I anticipated, I now lay before the Society; and though they will have the effect of destroying a pleasing and long-cherished illusion, I am sure the Royal Society will not be displeased by having the real truth set before them.

On the 30th of January 1649, Charles the First was beheaded; and on the 1st of February following, the Journal-Books of the House of Commons inform us*, that "a Committee appointed for securing the Crown Jewells, and other things, late the King's, reported that they have disposed them in a room under several doors now locked up†."

It is probable that the Royal Mace was among the articles of plate thus disposed of, as on the 17th of March, the Journal-Books of the House state, that "It be referred to the Committee for alteration of Seals to consider of a new form of Mace, and the special care thereof is committed to Mr. Love‡."

On the 13th of April 1649, it is recorded, that "Mr. Love reported several forms of a new Mace," upon which it was "Resolved, that this shall be the form of the new Mace§."

* * * * *

* Vol. 6. p. 164.

† Probably in the Tower, as Whitelock says that he went at this period with others to see the Seals locked up in the Tower.

‡ Vol. 6. p. 166.

§ Vol. 6. p. 184.

Instead of a design appear a number of asterisks as above, but fortunately the Parliamentary History and Whitelock's Memorials enable us to fill the blank in the most satisfactory manner. The Journal-Books of the House of Commons state, that on the 6th of June, "It was ordered that the new Mace, made by Thomas Maundy of London, Goldsmith, be delivered unto the charge of the Sergeant-at-Arms attending the Parliament; and that the said Mace be carried before the Speaker; and that all the Maces to be used in this Commonwealth be made according to the same form and pattern; and that the said Thomas Maundy have the making thereof, and none other*."

Now, according to the Parliamentary History, on the 6th of June (the same day, it will be observed, that the Journal-Books of the House of Commons state the new Mace was ordered to be delivered to the Sergeant-at-Arms) "a new Mace was brought into the House, ornamented with flowers, instead of the Cross and Ball on the top, with the Arms of England and Ireland, instead of the late King's†." Whitelock also states in his Memorials, that "on the 6th of June 1649, a new Mace with the Arms of England and Ireland instead of the King's Arms was approv'd and deliver'd to Sergeant Birkhead, to be used for the House; and all other Maces for the Commonwealth to be of that form‡." It is thus evident that a new Mace was provided for the Commonwealth Parliament, differing essentially in form from that used in the time of Charles the First. The Journals of the Commons further inform us, that on the 11th of June 1649, "the Committee of Revenue was authorized and required to pay forthwith, unto Thomas Maundy of London, the sum of £137 1s. 8d., in discharge of his bill of charges for making the new Mace for the service of this House§." There appears to have been some error in this amount, as on the 7th of August 1649, it was "Ordered, that it be referred to the Committee of Revenue, to examine the particulars touching the charge for making the Mace for this House; and if they find the same was miscast, and that the sum of £9 10s. remaineth yet due and unpaid for the same, that they forthwith make payment of the same unto Thomas Maundy ||."

Thus we have additional evidence, not only of the manufacture of a new Mace for the House, but even of its cost.

On the 9th of August 1649, the Journals of the Commons state that it was "Ordered, that those gentlemen who were appointed by this House to have the custody of the Regalia, do deliver them over unto the Trustees for sale of the goods of the late King, who are to cause the same to be totally broken; and that they melt down all the gold and silver, and sell the Jewells to the best advantage of the Commonwealth, and to take the like care of them that are in the Tower¶."

There is every reason to believe that this order was executed, and that not only the Regalia, but all gold and silver articles (among which would be included the Royal Mace) were melted down and sold. A curious MS., giving an account of the preparations for the

* Vol. 6. p. 226.

§ Vol. 6. p. 228.

† Vol. 3. p. 1314.

|| Vol. 6. p. 275.

‡ P. 406.

¶ Vol. 6. p. 276.

Coronation of Charles the Second, by Sir Edward Walker, Knt., Garter Principal King-at-Arms, published in 1820, informs us, "that because through the rapine of the then late unhappy times, all the Royal Ornaments and Regalia theretofore preserved from age to age in the treasury of the Church of Westminster had been taken away, sold, or destroyed, the Committee (appointed to order the ceremony) met divers times, not only to direct the re-making such Royal Ornaments and Regalia, but even to settle the form and fashion of each particular, all which did then retain the old names and fashion, although they had been newly made and prepared, by orders given to the Earl of Sandwich, Master of the Great Wardrobe, and Sir Gilbert Talbot, Knt., Master of the Jewell House."

The MS. then proceeds to enumerate the various articles ordered to be made for the Coronation of the King, which makes it evident that the former Regalia had been destroyed*.

The singular and fortunate discovery of the receipt of Sir Robert Vyner for £5500, being part payment of £31,978 9s. 11d., the charge for making the Regalia and different gold and silver ornaments, destined as presents at the Coronation of Charles the Second, lends additional and powerful weight to the presumption, that all the plate belonging to Charles the First was destroyed.

The receipt specifies the various articles made, among which are no less than "Eighteen Maces, and divers other parcells of guilt and white plate." It is worthy of mention, that this receipt was found by Mr. Robert Cole among the documents sold in 1838 by the then Lords of the Treasury as waste paper!! It forms the subject of a short communication made to the Society of Antiquaries in 1841, and printed in the 29th volume of the *Archæologia*†.

* The following interesting letter from Mr. Swift, Keeper of Her Majesty's Jewel House, confirms the above statement:—

Her Majesty's Jewel House,
March 15, 1846.

DEAR SIR,

You are but too right in your idea of the modern character of our Regalia. Whether as an Englishman, a Royalist, an Historian, or as a Gentleman, or in all these capacities, you must grieve over the wicked annihilation of its ancient memorials. The barbarous spirit which descended on the French revolutionists, when they destroyed even the tombs and the bones of their ancient monarchy, actuated our Puritans to break up and sell the old Crown Jewels of England.

The two Jewel Houses (for then there were *two*, the upper and the lower) were betrayed by my predecessors, Sir Henry and Mr. Carew Mildmay, in 1649, and their precious contents transferred to the Usurper. The most shameful part of this afflicting transaction was the breaking up of King Alfred's wirework gold filagree crown, and selling it for the weight of the metal and what the stones would fetch.

A new Regalia was ordered at the Restoration, to which additions or alterations have been made as requisite, constituting that which is now in my charge.

Believe me, my dear Sir, very faithfully yours,

C. R. Weld, Esq.

EDMUND LENTHAL SWIFTE, K. C. J.

† For another proof of the extraordinary want of judgment manifested by the Lords of the Treasury in selling several tons weight of national records, see a very curious pamphlet by Mr. Thomas Rodd, entitled "Narrative of the Proceedings instituted in the Court of Common Pleas against Mr. T. Rodd, for the purpose of wresting from him a certain MS. roll, under the pretence of its being a document belonging to that Court," 8vo, London 1845.

Between the period when the new Commonwealth Mace was first used and the 23rd of April 1653, the date of the celebrated dissolution, the Journals of the Commons frequently allude to the new Mace ; and as there is no record whatever of any other Mace having been ordered, we can arrive at no other conclusion, than that this was the celebrated Mace mentioned in all histories of this period as the “ Bauble,” so called by Cromwell when he dissolved the Parliament. That the Mace was turned out of the House of Commons admits of no doubt, as all historians agree on the point, the only discrepancy being, that some say Cromwell ordered a musketeer to take away that “ fool’s Bauble,” pointing to the Mace ; and others, that when all the Members had left the House, the doors were locked, and the Key with the Mace carried away by Colonel Otley.

It will not be out of place to mention here, that West’s famous picture of the Dissolution of the Long Parliament represents Cromwell in the act of pointing to the Mace as he uttered the words, “ Take away that fool’s Bauble ;” and it is important to state, that the Mace, which occupies a most prominent position in the centre of the picture, agrees perfectly in its appearance with the description given of it in the Parliamentary History and Whitelock’s Memorials, being nearly destitute of ornament, and without the Crown and Cross.

Had we no further evidence, the foregoing extracts from authentic documents would suffice to prove that the Mace turned out of the House of Commons by Cromwell was not that subsequently given to the Royal Society by Charles the Second, which differs totally in its appearance from the Mace made for the Commonwealth Parliament, and, as we have seen, used by the House of Commons from 1649 to 1653. And when we reflect, that immediately after the King’s execution, orders were issued to pull down, erase, and destroy every vestige of Royalty throughout the length and breadth of the land*, it is absurd to imagine that the individuals giving such orders, and exacting their most rigid execution, should, for a period of upwards of four years, have sat around a table on which lay a Mace, bearing not only the Royal Arms in the most conspicuous manner, but also a Crown and the letters C. R. four times repeated; and this they must have done to make the story true, that the Mace given to the Royal Society by Charles the Second is the famous “ Bauble.”

“ The sacred Mace,” as it has been called by some historians, though so rudely expelled from the House of Commons, was, strange as it may seem, preserved and soon restored to its high office ; for on the 7th of July 1653, only three days after the assembling of Cromwell’s first Parliament, the Journals of the Commons state, that the Sergeant-at-Arms was “ Ordered to repair to Lieut.-Col. Worseley for the Mace, and to bring it to this House ; and on the same day it

* The Journals of the Commons state, that the King’s Arms over the Speaker’s Chair were taken down, and those of the Commonwealth substituted, immediately after the execution of Charles the First.

was referred to a Committee to consider the use of the Mace, and with whom it shall remain, and report their opinion to the House*."

On the 12th of July the above Committee reported, that "the Mace should be made use of as formerly;" upon which the House resolved, "That the Mace shall be used in the House as formerly; and it was ordered that the Mace be brought in, which was done accordingly†."

From this period to the Restoration, there is no record of a new Mace having been ordered; and by the Journals of the Commons it appears that the Mace was used on all occasions as heretofore, and sometimes even carried before the Speaker, when he went at the head of the House to attend service at St. Margaret's Church, on the days appointed for solemn fasts.

The Restoration, which put an end to every outward manifestation of republicanism, terminated the existence of the Commonwealth Mace; indeed as much haste was shown to get rid of it, as was evinced after the execution of the late King in the ejection of the Royal Mace.

On the 27th of April 1660, the Journals of the Commons state, that E. Birkhead, Esq., late Sergeant-at-Mace, was "Ordered forthwith to deliver the Keys of the House, and the Mace belonging to the House to Sergeant Northfolk;" and on the 21st of May it was resolved‡, "That two new Maces be forthwith provided, one for this House, and the other for the Council of State, with the Cross and King's Majesty's Arms, and such other ornaments as were formerly usual; and it was referred to the Council of State to take care that the same be provided accordingly§."

Here we have additional evidence that the Royal Society's Mace and the "Bauble" are not identical, for we find the House of Commons ordering, a month before the Restoration, a new Mace, which is to be decorated "with the King's Arms, Cross, and other ornaments as were formerly usual."

Having thus clearly ascertained that the Mace presented to the Royal Society by Charles the Second is not that expelled from the House of Commons by Cromwell, I turned my attention to discover, if possible, the history of the Mace belonging to the Royal Society.

It will be remembered that the Archives of the Society throw no light whatever upon this important point, nor is the Mace even described||. It is merely stated, that it was sent from the Jewel House

* Vol. 7. p. 282.

† Ibid. p. 284.

‡ Vol. 8. pp. 34 and 39.

§ The Mace at present in the House of Commons corresponds in appearance to the above description, and is, I have every reason to believe, that made at the Restoration; it is very much like the Mace in the possession of the Royal Society, with the exception that the chasing and ornaments are executed in a much coarser manner. It is 4 feet 8 inches long, and weighs 251 oz. 2 dwts. 2 grs. There is no inscription, date, or maker's name, but simply the letters C. R. between the four shields, emblematic of England, Ireland, Scotland, and France; these letters are on all the Maces made at the time of the Restoration.

|| Evelyn says in his Diary, that "the King sent the Society a Mace of silver gilt of the same fashion and bigness as those carried before His Majestie, to be borne before the President on Meeting-daies," V. 1. p. 338; and it is recorded in

in the year 1663. Under these circumstances, and by the advice of my friend Sir Henry Ellis, I addressed a letter to Edmund Lenthal Swifte, Esq., Keeper of H. M. Jewel House, requesting permission to search the Archives, which I presumed were kept in that office. In reply I received the following letter:—

Her Majesty's Jewel House,
March 13, 1846.

DEAR SIR,

It would have much gratified me to aid the wishes of any friend of Sir Henry Ellis.

On your account too, your name and office would have been more than sufficient to claim attention. But I can only regret my inability in this matter. Since Edmund Burke's Bill, the Jewel House has undergone a radical change in its duties and functions. Previously, its Chief had the charge and presentation of the Royal gifts, whereof he had of course the accounts. Whatever entries there may be concerning the Mace, which was certainly given by Charles the Second to Lord Brouncker, as President of the Royal Society, in the old books of the Jewel House, they are most probably to be found in the Lord Chamberlain's Office, to whom the control of the Jewel House was transferred in (I believe) 1782. Not a single record is, or ever was, in my hands. Otherwise, to have accorded you fullest and freest access would have been to me an especial pleasure.

I am, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

EDMUND LENTHAL SWIFTE.

C. R. Weld, Esq.

The receipt of this letter caused me to write to the Lord Chamberlain for permission to examine the Archives under his charge. This was immediately granted, and with the kind assistance of the chief clerks in Lord Delawarr's Office, I fortunately, after a long search in a gloomy and damp apartment, which was formerly a stable, found the original Warrant, ordering a Mace to be made for the Royal Society.

The following is a copy of this most important and valuable document. The book in which it exists is entitled, "The Book of Warrants of the Lord Chamberlain, Edward, Earl of Manchester, of His Majesty's Household, for the Years 1663, 4, 5, 6 & 7," and the Warrant is entered under the head of "Jewell House":—

"A Warrant to prepare and deliver to the Rt. Hon. William Lord Viscount Brouncker, President of the Royall Society of London, for the improving of naturall knowledge by experiments; one guift Mace, of one hundred and fifty oz.*, being a guift from His Ma^{tie} to the said Society."

the Council-Book of the Society, that Sir Richard Brown, through the medium of Evelyn, presented the Society with a velvet cushion, whereon the Mace was laid when placed before the President.

* Troy weight, which approximates nearly to 190 oz. avoirdupois.

This Warrant is among those issued in 1663, and as several previous warrants exist, bearing the dates of January, February, March, and April, and others entered subsequently are dated May, June, and July, we may reasonably conclude, that the Warrant for making the Society's Mace was issued early in 1663; and this is strengthened by the fact, that the Society received the Mace in the month of August in the same year*.

This discovery not only destroys the long-entertained belief, that the Mace belonging to the Royal Society and the "Bauble" are identical, but also affords conclusive evidence that the former was made expressly for the Royal Society.

On a minute examination of the Society's Mace, in order to detect, if possible, the maker's name or a date, neither of which exist, I observed that the chasing on the stem consists entirely of Thistle leaves and flowers: at the time this fact passed unnoticed, but it is now evident that the Thistle was employed as the principal ornament on account of its being symbolical of St. Andrew, the patron saint of the Society, in whose honour the Fellows of the Society were accustomed, at the early anniversary Meetings, to wear a St. Andrew's Cross in their hats†.

This use of the Thistle is another proof that the Mace was made for the Society.

In conclusion, I cannot forbear observing, that although the Mace may not be as curious as before to the antiquary, divested as it now is of its fictitious historical interest, yet it is much more to be respected; for surely a Mace designated a "Bauble," and spurned from the House of Commons by a Republican, would scarcely be an appropriate gift from a Sovereign to the Royal Society.

The Mace in its possession was expressly made for the Society, and given to it by its Royal Founder; and the associations appertaining to it, embracing the remembrance, that around it have been gathered men whose names not only shed imperishable lustre on the Royal Society, but on the civilized world, must hallow it to all lovers of science and truth.

* Since the reading of this paper before the Society, Mr. Browell, the Chief Clerk in the Lord Chamberlain's Office, has been so obliging as to inform me, that the foregoing warrant is entered in another book of warrants, apparently a duplicate of that which I saw. The words of the warrant are similar to the above, but there is the important addition of the date, May 23, 1663; thus confirming my idea that the Warrant was issued in the early part of the latter year.

† Evelyn says in his Diary, under the date of November 30, 1663, "The first anniversary of our Society. It being *St. Andrew's* day, who was our Patron, each Fellow wore a *St. Andrew's* crosse of ribbon on the crown of his hat. After the election we din'd together, His Majestie sending us venison." Vol. 1. p. 347.